

Andrew M. Mekelburg
Assistant Vice President
Federal Government Relations



1300 I Street, NW, Suite 400 West
Washington, DC 20005

June 12, 2003

The Honorable Nancy L. Johnson
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Johnson:

Verizon would like to commend you on your introduction of the 2003 Medicare Modernization and Prescription Drug Act. We believe this year is the best opportunity to achieve this long overdue goal, and we are committed to playing a constructive role in this effort. We appreciate all the hard work you and your staff put in to putting this legislation together.

Verizon currently provides benefits for over 181,000 retirees and their dependents. We applaud you for your effort to design the structure of the new Medicare drug benefit that provides better opportunities for us to coordinate our prescription drug benefits with those that Medicare will provide. We see it as a strong partnership leveraging the best that Verizon and the Government can offer to provide important benefits to seniors.

Based upon the discussions we have had with your staff, we appreciate your effort to provide employers with new flexibility and options in providing benefits to our retiree population. We share the goal of providing our retirees quality health care and choices among plan options.

We are committed to working with you and other Members of Congress, through the entire legislative process, to strengthen and improve Medicare and to enact a prescription drug benefit that appropriately recognizes and encourages the key role that employers, like Verizon, fulfill in providing quality health care to seniors.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Mekelburg", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.